



PRESS RELEASE
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SIX ALLEGED DRUG TRAFFICKERS ARRESTED
IN IMMOKALEE OVER THE WEEKEND

Fort Myers, Florida - United States Attorney Paul I. Perez , Collier County Sheriff Don Hunter, and Drug Enforcement Administration Special-Agent-in-Charge Mark R. Trouville today announced the arrest of six Immokalee residents on federal drug charges involving the distribution of crack cocaine in that area. The round-up began on Friday evening this past weekend and continued through Sunday. The defendants are Lynette Gadsden, age 37, Lawrence Smith, age 37, Solon Daniel, age 65, Kenneth Dawson, age 25, Charles Byrd, age 45, Jimmie Hope, age 63. The charges for each defendant are possession of crack cocaine with intent to sell, and the defendants each face the maximum penalties of forty years, a \$2,000,000 fine, and 4 years of supervised release after serving their prison sentences. They will make their initial appearance in federal court in Ft. Myers at 1:30 p.m. this afternoon.

U.S. Attorney Perez applauded the efforts of law enforcement stating, "I want to thank Sheriff Hunter for his cooperation and the assistance of his outstanding deputies and detectives who worked day and night to make this effort a success. Working along side

special agents from DEA the Collier Sheriff's Office has put a major dent in the drug trafficking trade in Immokalee."

"This is another of our valuable successes working in partnership with the U.S. Attorney's Office and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. The Collier County Sheriff's Office works hard to keep illegal drugs off our streets and keep our communities safe. This operation shows our continued dedication to that effort," Sheriff Hunter said. "The Immokalee area is not alone in portraying a historical concern with drug dealing in Collier County. We will be attacking our other geographical areas of concern for further relief from the dangers that illicit drugs and pharmaceutical misuse represents," Sheriff Hunter said.

"With these arrests, the streets of Collier County are safer today. DEA is committed to ridding communities of drugs and the violence that accompanies this death trade," said DEA Special Agent in Charge Mark R. Trouville. "The success of this investigation was the result of hard work by DEA and our partners at the Collier County Sheriff's Office who have pledged to make our communities safer."

An Indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.

The case will be prosecuted by Chief Assistant United States Attorney Douglas Molloy.